

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Please revise claims 1, 2 and 3, as shown.

Cancel claims 4 and 5.

I CLAIM:

1. (Currently Amended) A rocket assisted payload launch system comprising:

a) a metal container including first and second end walls, said end walls being parallel to each other;

b) said container further including first and second side walls, said side walls being parallel to each other;

c) a bottom wall extending between said end walls and said side walls to seal said container;

d) a plurality of containerized concentric tubes retained within the interior of said container for discharging rocket assisted payloads;

e) each rocket assisted payload including a booster rocket, and a payload releasably mounted atop said booster rocker;

~~e)~~ f) each containerized concentric launch tube opening having a sealed bottom and an upwardly opening top;

~~f)~~ g) means for retaining said containerized concentric launch tubes in ~~an~~ a fixed upstanding, vertically oriented array within the interior of said container;

~~g) said containerized concentric launch tubes being spaced apart by a predetermined distance;~~

h) an umbilical cord connected to the each containerized concentric launch tube and adapted to deliver power for ignition to the booster rocket of the a rocket assisted payload inserted into the tube; and

i) a sequence controller connected to the umbilical cord of each rocket assisted payload within a containerized concentric launch tube so that the booster rockets for the rocket assisted payloads within the containerized concentric tubes can be selectively energized by said controller.

2. (Currently Amended) A rocket assisted payload launch system as defined in claim 1 wherein said container is twenty

feet in length, eight feet in width, and eight feet high, ~~and is fabricated of heavy gauge metal.~~

3. (Currently Amended) A rocket assisted payload launch system as defined in claim 1 wherein ~~spacers maintain~~ said containerized concentric launch tubes are maintained about a foot apart, measured from the center of one missile launch to the center of the adjacent missile launch tube.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Previously Presented) A rocket assisted payload launch system as defined in claim 2 wherein containers are stacked atop one another to increase the capacity of the system.

7. (Previously Presented) A rocket assisted payload launch system as defined in claim 2 wherein containers are stacked adjacent to each other to increase the capacity of the system.

tubes, and as a shipping container for the launchable devices. The canisters fit between partitions 14 in housing 16 in Yagla, and may be stacked in the vertical direction, by interconnecting pins 44 and studs 38, as shown in Fig. 4.

The stacked canisters rest upon platform 18 in housing 16. The canisters are removed from housing 16 by a crane mechanism that inserts hook connectors into hooks 54 on I-beam 50 of shipping device, shown in Figure 5. Capture members 56 lift stud members 38, which allow the crane operator to lift the canister and move same to its desired location.

Cammin-Christy discloses a rocket launcher having a multiplicity of rocket tubes 12, which tubes may be directed as a unit and adjusted to produce a variety of patterns of fire. The rocket tubes are secured by ball pivots 15 to support plate 10, as shown in Fig. 2; the support plate is tilted by hydraulic assembly 58. Links 16 on lazy long assemblies 18, 19, 20, 21 interconnect the rocket tubes, and tilt same about pivots 15, in the lateral and/or longitudinal directions, when actuated by a drive shaft, as shown in FIG. 5. The fixed tube 13 serves as an anchor post for the movable tubes. Electrical firing circuit may provide progressive firing of tubes 12, or salvo-firing of tubes 12, as noted in column 4, lines 70-74.

Echweber does not disclose "containerized concentric tubes" "...for discharging rocket assisted payloads," each rocket assisted payload including a booster rocket with a payload releasably secured atop the rocket.. Also, launching guides 12 in Eichweber are independently adjustable in the X and Y directions for precise angular adjustment. The adjustable launching guides in Eichweber are more sophisticated and costly than applicant's claimed fixed array of upwardly opening containerized concentric tubes; such tubes are retained in a fixed array by means, such as spacers 38, 40. Such structural relationships lead to simplified operation for applicant's launch system, and greatly reduced costs for manufacture, transport and maintenance.